

OPINION 2253 (Case 3428)***Palaemon rosenbergii* De Man, 1879 (currently *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*; Crustacea, Decapoda): usage conserved by designation of a neotype**

Abstract. The Commission has conserved usage of the specific name of *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* (De Man, 1879) by setting aside all previous type fixations and designating a neotype for the nominal species *Palaemon rosenbergii* De Man, 1879.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Crustacea; Decapoda; PALAEMONIDAE; *Macrobrachium*; *Macrobrachium dacqueti*; *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*; giant freshwater prawn; Southeast Asia.

Ruling

- (1) Under the plenary power it is hereby ruled that all previous type fixations for the nominal species *Palaemon rosenbergii* De Man, 1879, are set aside and specimen no. RMNH D 1065 at the Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum, Leiden, Netherlands (lectotype of *Palaemon dacqueti* Sunier, 1925) is designated as the neotype.
- (2) The name *rosenbergii* De Man, 1879, as published in the binomen *Palaemon rosenbergii* and as defined by the neotype designated in (1) above, is hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

History of Case 3428

An application to conserve the usage of the specific name of *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* (De Man, 1879) for a commercially important giant freshwater prawn from Southeast Asia by designating a neotype was received from D. Wowor (*Research Centre for Biology, Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), Cibinong, Indonesia*) and P.K.L. Ng (*National University of Singapore, Republic of Singapore*) on 26 June 2007. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 65: 288–293 (December 2008). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. Comments supporting the case were published in BZN 66: 340–341 and 67: 64.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 December 2009 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 65: 291. At the close of the voting period on 1 March 2010 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 24: Ballerio, Bouchet, Brothers, Fautin, Grygier, Halliday, Harvey, Kottelat, Krell, Kullander, Lamas, Lim, Minelli, Ng, Patterson, Pape, Papp, Rosenberg, Štys, van Tol, Winston, Yanega, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 3: Alonso-Zarazaga, Bogutskaya and Kojima.

Pyle was on leave of absence.

Voting FOR the proposals, Brothers said that the statement, 'A new name, *Macrobrachium wallacei* sp. nov., is here proposed for the species identified as *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* in Wowor & Ng (2007)' surely actually referred to *Palaemon spinipes* Schenkel, 1902. He thought that this must be the true taxonomic species involved (after the change of type specimens for *Macrobrachium rosenbergii*) despite the unavailability of that name through homonymy. The new name should therefore have been explicitly proposed to replace *Palaemon spinipes* Schenkel, 1902 (rather than this merely being implied) and would therefore clearly have the same type specimen(s) as *Palaemon spinipes* Schenkel, 1902. Brothers noted that there was no discussion of this in the application, but it appeared that the designation of the supposed 'holotype' of *Macrobrachium wallacei* may be invalid. However, this did not affect the requests enumerated in the proposals. Also voting FOR, Grygier said the formal proposals to the Commission only concern *M. rosenbergii*, and clearly require a YES vote, but he is dissatisfied with the manner of proposal of the new species name *M. wallacei*. He said that if the Case is voted down, the authors will have succeeded only in proposing another junior synonym. Because the latter name can't actually become the valid name for the species involved until the original holotype of *M. rosenbergii* has been suppressed, it is somewhat unclear to him whether Article 11.5 for availability is satisfied. He felt that could have been clarified by a proposal to put *wallacei* as well as *rosenbergii* on the Official List. No diagnosis of the new species is given in the Case. Grygier felt that while reference to Wowor & Ng (2007) might satisfy Article 13.1.1 of the Code, there is really no suggestion in the Case of the presence of a concise diagnosis in that paper, either. A diagnosis would be preferable to 'morphological and morphometric datasets' from which differences might be gleaned. Apart from this, he wondered why the former holotype of *M. rosenbergii* was not chosen to be the holotype of *M. wallacei* and also whether the designated specimen was described and illustrated in detail by Wowor & Ng (2007). Kottelat said he voted FOR, only because of the commercial importance of the species. Kullander also voted FOR, stating that for all practical purposes, this seemed to be a supportable case, although he would have preferred the neotype to have been based on a recently collected, well preserved specimen with precise locality data. He also observed that the proposed specimen cannot come 'as near as practicable' from the original type-locality because the reason for its designation was to solve a geographic incongruence. Winston said that she voted FOR, as it was a sensible course in the case of this commercially important species.

Kojima, voting AGAINST, said he had difficulty understanding why the authors of the case (Wowor & Ng) who were also the authors of an excellent taxonomic paper (Wowor & Ng, 2007) made a proposal that, if it were approved, would require complicated treatment of the name-bearing type specimens and that might result in a more confusing situation, rather than keeping *rosenbergii* and *dacqueti* as they were. The purpose of this proposal was to conserve the usage of *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* (de Man, 1879) for a commercially important giant freshwater prawn. However the present case did not seem to correspond to the case in which 'the existing name-bearing type of a nominal species-group taxon is not in taxonomic accord with the prevailing usage of names and that the stability or universality is threatened thereby' (Article 75.6). Before Wowor & Ng's (2007) taxonomic work, the two species, one that is widely fished in South and Southeast Asia and extensively cultured in Asia,

America and Africa, and the other that is less commercially important and restricted in its distribution to the east of Huxley's Line, had been treated as a single species under the name *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* (de Man, 1879). Wowor & Ng's 2007 paper clearly showed that they are distinct species and the name for the former is *Macrobrachium dacqueti* (Sunier, 1925) and that for the latter is *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* (de Man, 1879). Kojima felt that such a change of names could easily be traced and would not cause any serious confusion.

Original reference

The following is the original reference to the name placed on an Official List by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

rosenbergii, *Palaemon*, De Man, 1879, *Notes from the Royal Zoological Museum of the Netherlands at Leyden*, 1(3), Note 41: 167.